1. Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

of its cattle. Incest is equally serious if it has been committed unwittingly, through the marriage of two persons who did not know that they were within the proscribed degrees of relationship. It is thought that such people will have no children or that, if children are born, they will die in infancy. If a relationship is discovered, the marriage is dissolved at once, even if it is of long standing, and the incest ceremony performed.

Among the Tanala Menabe the ceremony for incest is as follows: The guilty man provides an ox for sacrifice. This is killed at the village sacred place and the stomach taken out and cut into a thin, continuous strip, like a thong. The guilty parties are then seated side by side and the stomach-thong wound around the necks of both, drawing their heads together. The contents of the stomach are smeared over their heads and shoulders. The sacrificial parts of the meat are taken and grilled over an open fire. The sacrificial priest of the gens places the meat on the altar and invokes the gods by the usual formula except that, before repeating their names, he shouts "I call!" three times. After repeating the gods' names he says: "There are the two people who are guilty. They have killed an ox to efface their sin, as you have directed. It is for that reason that we make the sacrifice." He then invites the gods to eat and, after an interval, sends them away, calling the ancestors and going through the same formula. The rest of the ceremony is like that for ordinary sacrifices. The Tanala Ikongo are said to have an incest ceremony also, but no details were available.

BERDACHES

In both divisions of the Tanala there are a few men who have adopted the female role. They are very rare and none of them were known personally to my informants. Such individuals are called *saromboay*. They wear the woman's regular costume and hairdressing and practice the woman's industries, such as weaving. The natives say that such men show feminine traits from birth and their attitude toward them is entirely neutral. They are neither despised nor considered marked out for any special activity. Informants had never heard of a *saromboay* acting as a medicine-man or showing supernatural powers, but said there was no rule against their becoming medicine-men.

I believe that *saromboay* exist in all the Malagasy tribes, but the natives are reticent in regard to them, especially with the missionaries. Among the Bara, who adjoin the Tanala on the south-

1- Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

west, *sarombavy* seem to be rather numerous. Three classes of 838
individuals are represented, hermaphrodites, homosexuals, and men who are impotent. The hermaphrodites adopt the role at birth, the others at puberty or later. The Bara have a class of professional male dancers, many of whom are homosexual. In extreme cases these become *sarombavy*, or fluctuate between the male and female roles. One dancer was pointed out to me as having been a *sarombavy* for several years, after which he reverted to male dress. He did this for economic reasons, for he could not dance while pretending to be a woman. I learned of another case in which a *sarombavy* had married a man and lived with him as a subsidiary wife, although the man already had a real wife and children. Apparently the first wife accepted the arrangement without protest.

By no means all *sarombavy* are homosexual or hermaphrodite. Women everywhere discuss the virility of their lovers and this is especially the case among the cattle people of the south and west, who allow great sexual license before marriage. If a young man is feeble or impotent, the whole community will know it and the women will jeer at him. If he adopts the *sarombavy* role, the mockery ceases. I was told of two young men who had done so after leading normal existences to the age of puberty. They had lived as women for several years without manifesting homosexual tendencies. The most interesting case which came under my observation was that of a man of sixty, a widower with grown children. He had led a normal life up to the age of fifty-two or three, when a long illness left him impotent and unfit for heavy work. He declared that he was no longer a man, adopted woman's dress, and learned to weave. This man was a Betsileo, settled among the Bara, and made a good living by selling his cloth to them. He was always referred to as a *sarombavy*, but seemed to command considerable respect.

There seems to be no instance, among the Tanala or elsewhere, of a woman adopting the male role.

MARRIAGE

Men normally marry between the ages of eighteen and twenty- 582
two and women between sixteen and twenty. By this time both sexes are physically mature and able to take care of a family without assistance. In general, men are a few years older than their wives, but any great discrepancy in age is frowned on. There are a few bachelors, some of whom live alone and cook for themselves, but they are ridiculed and thought mentally abnormal. Apparently all